

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY
VETERANS' RECOGNITION SUBCOMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Section 19.84, Wis. Stats., a regular meeting of the **Brown County Veterans' Recognition Subcommittee** was held on Tuesday, February 21, 2017 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 201 of the Northern Building, 305 E. Walnut Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

PRESENT: Chair Erickson, Duane Pierce, Delores Pierce, Joe Witkowski, Jim Haskins, Jerry Polus, Joan Brusky, Ed Koslowski
EXCUSED: Louise Dahlke

****Running Total of Veterans' Certificates: 1799**

1. Call Meeting to Order.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bernie Erickson at 4:30 pm.

2. Invocation.

3. Approve/Modify Agenda.

Motion made by Jim Haskins, seconded by Ed Koslowski to approve. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

At this time Chair Erickson introduced Supervisor Joan Brusky to the group and the group introduced themselves to her as well.

4. Approve/Modify Minutes of January 17, 2017.

Motion made by Duane Pierce, seconded by Delores Pierce to approve. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Update re: Honor Rewards Program.

CVSO Jerry Polus informed there are currently 80 businesses participating in the Honor Rewards program and 222 cards have been issued. Brusky asked what the typical discount is and Erickson responded that typically it is about 10%, but the participating businesses have the discretion to give whatever discount they choose. Polus said the program is only offered in four counties in Wisconsin. The others are Dane, Adams and Jefferson, but he noted that Brown County far exceeds the number of participating businesses.

6. Update re: 2017 Veterans' Appreciation Day at the Brown County Fair.

A discussion occurred regarding holding the event on Sunday versus Saturday. Several months ago it was indicated that there was a possibility of a Huey helicopter being brought in for the event but that could only happen on Sunday so there was discussion regarding holding the Appreciation Day events on Sunday rather than Saturday. The Huey has now fallen through so the event will be held on Saturday. This was the preferred day for the group and it was indicated that the schedule of the day's events will be very similar to last year's schedule.

Polus said he will send in the request for the Navy Band to see if they are available for the event. The band would be free, however, they appreciate donations to offset their expenses and Polus thought a donation of \$500 would be appropriate. Erickson said we would also need to rent a stage and between the band and stage, a lot of our budget would be eaten up, especially when you factor in having to buy something to hand out. It was indicated that we could still contact Humana and Heartland Hospice for donations.

The discussion regarding the Fair continued with talking about who to honor at the Fair and it was decided that this year's honorees will be Purple Heart recipients and disabled veterans. The number of attendees was discussed and Polus indicated he can try to get some numbers to get some idea of how many handout items will be needed. Haskins said if we are going to honor disabled veterans, we need to have a golf cart available at the entrance to get them to the tent. Brusky was at last year's event and said that with the rainy weather it was somewhat difficult to traverse the ground and the disabilities would have to be considered so that everyone is able to be accommodated.

Koslowski recalled that Fair Board President Steve Corrigan talked about going to e-tickets this year. Erickson said that if we go to e-tickets, anyone could print them off. Koslowski agreed, but said that if someone used an e-ticket, they would also have to show a veterans' ID to get in. He noted that a lot of people showed up without tickets last year and they were admitted with veterans' identification. Koslowski also brought up the Marine that sits on the midway in his Class A uniform with the ammo can asking for donations for the Wounded Warrior Regiment. Koslowski said he has not heard anything positive or negative about the man, but his concern is that the tent that our group sponsors houses all of the Brown County veteran organizations with their own causes and they are not allowed to sell anything or have any raffles or anything like that, but this person is on his own and says he sends money in to the national organization because there is no state program. Koslowski feels this is unfair to the Brown County organizations. Haskins said on behalf of the Subcommittee he will ask the Fair Board at the next meeting not to allow that person in to collect donations on the midway.

7. Report from CVSO Jerry Polus.

Polus indicated they have run out of the coffee mugs they sell in his office. He would like the subcommittee to approve the purchase of 36 mugs at a cost of \$265 as people are asking for them. That number of mugs should last about three years and he noted that proceeds of the sale of the mugs go back into the Subcommittee account.

Erickson said this would take a big bite out of our budget and he said he could possibly find another company to donate the mugs. Polus said he will keep this in mind next time he has to order. Erickson said that by the time we pay for the band and the stage for the event at the Fair, we are pushing the limits of the budget, but it was noted that there could be donors for the stage and the band and, in addition, there were some funds that had been carried over from last year.

Motion made by Duane Pierce, seconded by Jim Haskins to authorize the purchase of 36 mugs at a cost of \$265. Vote taken. Ayes: Duane Pierce, Delores Pierce, Joe Witkowski, Jim Haskins, Jerry Polus, Ed Koslowski Nay: Bernie Erickson. MOTION CARRIED 6 to 1

Polus also reported that he has recently learned that Festival Foods on University Avenue is now hosting an American Heroes Cafe every Friday morning in their community conference room. All veterans are welcome to come and meet fellow veterans, share stories and enjoy complimentary coffee and donuts. More information on this attached.

8. Report from Committee Members Present (Erickson, Dahlke, Haskins, Koslowski, Pierce & Witkowski).

-Erickson reported that his fishing club has adopted a lake at the Green Bay Botanical Gardens and they hope to host small groups of veterans to come and fish there. He noted that at this time there is no dock so the fishing would be from the shore. Koslowski suggested that Erickson contact the Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing group that meets at the VA Clinic to see if they would be a good group for Erickson to work with.

-Haskins reported that he read recently that General Motors hires more veterans and provides more discounts to veterans than any other car company. He also said that Swift Transportation says they are number one in honoring veterans. More information on this can be found on their website at: www.swifttrans.com. Finally, Haskins said he recently attended the Winter Blues party at Vandervest Harley Davidson. This is a fundraiser and this year the funds raised were donated to the Howard Veterans Memorial. Haskins also talked about a veteran, Andres De Leon, who came to the United States from Mexico at the age of 12. He served two overseas tours in Vietnam and was then honorably discharged. He then went into a deep depression and became addicted to heroin. He was arrested and served nearly three years in prison. He was then deported back to Mexico.

-Koslowski suggested that this group think about recruiting new members for this Subcommittee, especially as we get closer to the Fair event and Veterans Day. He would like the group to think about what guidelines we would

like to use when finding new people to join. He talked to the President of the Desert Vets who informed that he could try to help fill the vacancies and Koslowski thought this was a good idea, especially to get some younger guys in the group.

Koslowski also said he got a call from someone to assist in a meat raffle at Geano Beach. A number of organizations participated in the event and \$2,022 was raised for the Vets Center and Holtger Construction of De Pere donated another \$1,000. Another meat raffle will be held at Plank Road Pub.

-Pierce reported that Post 57 will be holding a meat raffle on March 4 at Shoots and the State Commander will be attending. He also reported that next month there will be an event called Connect to Courage held at the PAC in Appleton. This is a free event and open to the public. The goal is to raise awareness and learn about the plight and challenges of veterans. There will be resources and educational tools to assist veterans, their families and the community. Connect to Courage is a collaborative effort in the Fox Cities. Lead organizations include American Legion Post 38, Fox Valley Veterans Council, Fox Valley Technical College Veterans Services, Prevent Suicide Fox Cities and Veterans Mentor group. The goal of the event is to connect veterans and those who care about them to resources in the community that will help with life's transitions. As part of the event the Project 22 documentary will be shown at 2:30 pm and again at 7:00 pm. Project 22 follows two combat-wounded veterans on a mission to find hope. Two veterans rode motorcycles from San Francisco to New York and spoke with veterans, researchers, mental health clinicians and educators along with asking hard hitting questions and opening up about their own struggles. There will also be QPR Training. QPR stands for question, persuade and refer and is a simple three step process anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide.

-Witkowski reported that the Shrine Circus will host a Veterans Night at the circus on March 2 where all veterans with identification will receive free admission.

9. **Such Other Matters as Authorized by Law. None.**

10. **Adjourn.**

Motion made by Jim Haskins, seconded by Duane Pierce to adjourn at 5:16 pm. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted,

Therese Giannunzio
Recording Secretary

Festival Foods American Heroes Café EVERY Friday morning

Festival Foods this month will bring its American Heroes Café, a weekly gathering for area veterans, to its store on Green Bay's north side located at 2430 University Avenue.

Beginning Feb. 17 and then continuing each Friday after that from 8 a.m. to noon Festival Foods will provide complimentary coffee and donuts to veterans in the community conference room, located above the deli. All veterans are welcome each week to meet fellow veterans, share stories, and enjoy freshly baked treats and coffee.

Hosting the American Heroes Café is one way Festival Foods demonstrates its commitment to building relationships with guests and area organizations that help so many. With more than 6,500 associates at its 25 stores, Festival Foods is honored to be able to give back to its communities through event sponsorships and charitable giving to a variety of programs and organizations across the state.

The American Heroes Cafes began in 2011 at the former Spiegelhoff's SuperValu in Kenosha. Festival Foods, which acquired the SuperValu and built a new store nearby in 2013, offered to continue the American Heroes Café inside the new store. Today, about 50 veterans stop by the Festival Foods-Kenosha community conference room each week. Last year, the company added cafes inside its Janesville and Menasha stores.

"Inviting veterans to our store every Friday is one way we can thank them for sacrificing so much for each of us," said Rick Teegarden, store director of the Green Bay-North Festival Foods.

An elevator, located between the meat and deli departments, allows access to the community room. Stairs are also nearby.



<https://www.festfoods.com/blog/festival-foods-weekly-veterans-program-starts-green-bay>